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ABSTRACT

This journal issue deals with the ways in which elements of a literary text specify the manner in which an oral interpreter will present the text to an audience. After an introductory statement, four poems by a contemporary poet are presented as sample texts. Four commentators discuss the ways these poems might be interpreted to an audience, and the poet then responds to each statement. The journal editors outline several additional considerations. (GW)

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ISSUES IN INTERPRETATION

Volume Two Number Three

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THE ISSUE

The Audience in Oral Interpretation: Literature

The first part of this issue concerning the dimensions of the audience has focused attention on theoretical postures before the fact of performance, seeking to locate and define the importance of the audience in interpretative theory.

But the interpreter's question regarding the manner and degree of his relationship with an audience frequently leads him directly to the text for an answer. Poet and interpretation theorist Chester Clayton Long has said:

> The audiences of literature are an inherent part of its structure . . . the performer's relation to his audience and his audience's needs in relation to any given piece of literature being performed is also an implied part of that structure.[1]

If that premise be true, and many other theorists suggest it is, then our pre-performance plans, as well as our theory, must deal directly with those features of the text which specify our manner and degree of audience relationship in performance.

Interpreters have been advised to suit their "interpretation to the style of the poem."[2] We agree, as we are sure most interpreters do, but is "style" the feature of the text that reveals our audience relationship? The "open-closed" situation offers another performing guide directly tied to the text, and presumably validated by it. Proponents of the open-closed situation sometimes translate those terms as direct eye contact or indirect eye contact, as though to clarify the performing parallels. However valuable such advice is, eye contact remains only one feature of the performer's audience relationship. Some additional disagreement exists among interpreters regarding the nature of the audience: is it an implied audience, the persona's audience, or some uniquely balanced blend of the two?

The question is clear, but the answer(s) evasive. Is the nature, manner, and degree of the interpreter's relationship with his audience clearly indicated by the text he will perform? Will interpreters agree or disagree on these relationships? And, if they do agree, will the agreement be coincidental or will a few features of textual analysis emerge upon which to base further

investigations? If we believe that audience treatment is structurally imbedded in every piece of literature, then these relationships must be internally specified.

Chester Clayton Long has generously provided four poems as sample texts to be investigated for the features which imply, or directly orchestrate, the interpreter's performing relationship with his audience. These poems will form the basis of the response to this second part of our investigation of the audience.

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1 Chester Clayton Long, *The Liberal Art of Interpretation* (New York: Harper and Row, 1974), p. 420.

2 Robert S. Breen, "Some Difficulties in Regarding Modern Poetry Publicly," *Western Speech*, XIX (October, 1955), 249.

A Suite From the Denise Poems

(Poems for the love of a dancer)

I

THERE WAS PANIC ABOARD THE TITANTIC, TOO

I'm not the unsinkable fellow I paint for you,
Though I cannot be torn in half like your husband
By the iceberg of your guile; and I hope, when I'm through,
You'll believe someone can care deeply, without command,

But with healthy appreciation for what you are.
I don't *need* you. I love you. That makes all the difference.
Oh, we all need sex and affection, but the care
I have for you transcends that mere dependence;

For these can be had from anyone, not merely you.
I want them with you because I choose.
If you choose, too, we will not lie, and do
The mother-child, or father-child, and lose.

We will come together because we choose to love,
Not wreck on the iceberg of need, though push may come to shove.

II

THE BEAST WITHIN ME IS DYING OF NEGLECT

Diana, the huntress, turned Acteon into a stag, and slew him with the aid of his own hounds because he had dared to look upon her nakedness.

The frowsy whiskers on his upturned face,
His baleful eye turned questioningly to the light,
A comic ragamuffin of despair, he stays,
The cool pool's leavings dripping from the slight,

Comic upturn of the corner of his mouth,
As he would ask "What horn is this? Could it be
The huntress and my hounds?" Though to ribbons all his youth
Be torn, he would be at bay for her, to see

For one flashing instant that marvellous face,
That little movement as the spear is thrown at him;
When, her breasts revealed, the spear, the chase,
Are all reversed; and he springs at her, the slim

Spear engorged within his loins, to pierce her,
Impaled within his arms, within love's golden blur.

III

THE HOBBIT WHO LIVES NEXT DOOR IS DYING, TOO

He has a crooked leg, and ogles all
My women, but has never seen me with you. Lately,
He sees me all alone, and has, since fall.
I no longer feed his lust. His eye is slowly

Growing dim. He thinks I am a blade
Like he could never be with his crooked wife.
She is fading too. If they only knew I'd made
Love to no one since November, their life

Might be better for it. Now, it's mid-May,
And his eye lit up a little when he saw me pass
Last week. He saw you in my step, the way
I strode past at five A.M., like a god of grass,

Tall, slender and graceful, and green with life.
Oh, if only I could have you like he has his wife.

IV

THEN THE RADIO PLAYED THE DANCE OF THE HAPPY SPIRITS FROM GLUCK'S ORPHEUS AND EURYDICE

Of all the sweetness I have never tasted until now
You and this music speak, a nectar of the spirit's flower,
A honey of the soul, with which you drug, bow,
And subdue the raging lion of my power.

In your sweet lap his head forever he would lay,
Forever satisfied of all his prowling need,
And like the Flying Dutchman, get a stay
From this agony of wandering, where his heart would never bleed

Like great valves of the sea, rushing in his ears,
The all consuming quest a madness in his eyes,
Driving the ship of his body relentless through the years,
The empty, crashing years of pain that never dies.

One glimpse of your immortal face undoes
His thirst for home. His anchor falls, and it is love's.

KATHARINE TAYLOR LOESCH

Before analyzing the shifting roles of audiences present at oral interpretations, I must clarify what I consider oral interpretation to be. The interpreter's first task is to finish the author's creation by bringing the poem into vital oral and aural being — this I call his *intrinsic interpretation.*[1] In Roman Ingarden's terms, the *schematized* poem recorded in the text must be physically and aurally concretized — either mentally or orally. To use another Ingarden term, it must be made *determinate.* To my mind the oral interpreter is the one who most completely determines Ingarden's *undetermined places.*[2] He tunes body and psyche so that he can bring into being the living poem.

The interpreter creates at the level of Ingarden's auditory *stratum* (or, if you like, auditory-kinesthetic), a two-fold stratum that is both digital and analogic.[3] Before an immediate audience the performer also brings into being an additional analogic envelope of *communication* which conveys the fully created poem to the audience. This is *full interpretation.* Along with vocal aspects, such as projection, increased excitement, and intensity, the communicative envelope may include size of room, age of audience, occasion, and the like.

Ideally, the interpreter decides well in advance the role of the real audience. Is it to be incorporated into the poem, or is it to perceive the poem through the analogic communicative envelope in which it naturally plays the role of analogic sender as well as receiver? It inevitably will have some effect on the performer, his concretization, and thus on the poem, though hopefully not on its schematic aspects. But this is the subject of the next issue.

Decision as to the role of the audience depends on whether the audience is sufficiently congruent with an addressee within the poem to be persuaded to play that role, or whether it should fuse with the implied outer audience.[4]

Long's poems immediately declare the presence of an outer audience simply by being sonnets. Poems I, III, and IV have clearly also an intrinsic addressee whom the interpreter must create so that the audience may watch him/her address her. In poem II, the poet first addresses an implied audience with which the real audience can naturally fuse. But there are modifications. In II, the speaker, as narrators will, adopts Actaeon's voice, and from this point his description is so intense that his point of view shifts to Actaeon's and becomes virtually dramatic, the audience watching. In III the comic detachment at the outset allows some directness to the audience, while in the intensification of lines 11, 12 and 13, he addresses her, aware of her absence, alone, while the audience watches. In IV the apostrophe is to Eurydice as *anima* revealed through Gluck's music. In this poem he might address

Eurydice throughout, speaking his last sentence only to himself. Or he might continue to Eurydice, while the audience watches, until the close.

University of Illinois
at Chicago Circle

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1 For a fuller discussion of the interpreter's task and the role of audiences, see "Towards an Ontology of Literature in Performance," *Oral English*, I (Fall, 1972), 8-14.

2 See Roman Ingarden, *The Literary Work of Art: An Investigation on the Borderline of Ontology, Logic and Theory of Literature*, trans. George G. Grabowicz (Evanston, 1973), and *The Cognition of the Literary Work of Art*, trans. Ruth Ann Crowley and Kenneth R. Olson (Evanston, 1973).

3 See "Ontology," *passim*, for these terms, and for further discussion and bibliography concerning Ingarden's terms as well.

4 The question of the inevitable assumption of an implied audience for the written poem, along with other matters of audience theory, is discussed in T. S. Eliot, "The Three Voices of Poetry," *On Poetry and Poets* (New York, 1957) p. 97, p. 109, and *passim;* and in Walter J. Ong, S. J., "The Writer's Audience is Always a Fiction," *PMLA*, XC (January, 1975), 9-21.

Mr. Long's Comments:

Ms. Loesch's comments are instructive to me, in that some connections between my internal audience specifications and the outward audience's presence are clarified. It is especially the possibilities in IV which she points out that had totally escaped my notice. I also like her statement that audience specifications are at least as complex within any poem as the parameters of paralanguage, age, background and experience, attitude set, and bodily configuration.

CHARLES JOHN MCGEEVER

In responding to the question posed by the editors of Vol. II, No. 3 of *Issues in Interpretation*, I have sought to develop an answer I believe to be paradigmatic.

I would like to promote the interpretation that the primary relationship between the personae of all quality lyric poetry and all reasonably sensitive audiences is "voyeuristic." The term, cleansed of its prurient tone, is meant to suggest that the audience looks on, is silent witness to an activity at the same moment the personae — as well as the auditors internal to the work — *pretend* to be their own and only witness. This position appears to be corroborated by Northrop Frye who, in discussing the various radicals of presentation for each literary genre, states that the lyric's distinguishing feature is "the concealment of the poet's audience from the poet." (*Anatomy of Criticism*, p. 249.) Furthermore, the lyric is "preeminently the utterance that is overheard. The lyric poet normally pretends to be talking to himself or someone else . . . a personal friend, a lover, a god, a personified abstraction of a natural object." (*Ibid.*) In the structural privacy of the lyric, the persona seemingly reveals attitudes about himself that might appear mawkish in verse or prose forms.

In this view, the persona-audience transaction is both complex and paradoxical: the persona speaks, but is supposed not to be heard; the audience is witness, but supposed not to be seen. What, in effect, occurs is that the persona, guaranteed his privacy by the lyric mode, extends himself to the point of vulnerability achieving those moment of sensitivity, raw power and insight that I have always felt were central to the fine lyrics of our language as well as to Long's poems. Yet, without the "silent witness," the persona would have little need to craft his thought since a lexical and grammatical system implies communication with an audience. For the poet, and for the performer of poetry, the audience signals restraint. "Unseen," "unheard," the voyeur looks upon a most privileged moment and his silence serves to intensify the honesty of the poet's voice.

In performance, I have usually recommended a closed focus for the lyric and an open, or combination, focus for verse. Considering the radical of presentation for each, the audience looks in at lyric, but is apostrophized in verse. This observation is hardly new; yet allied with Frye's theories, the relationships among poet, poem, and audience that interpretation theorists have always so eloquently expressed attain greater verficiation.

Baylor University

Mr. Long's Comments:

I like Mr. McGeever's careful, paradigmatic approach, in which he takes existing critical concepts and shows how in fact they are attempts at describing performative elements. This kind of yoking of abstract and specific is what we most need in this area of our study. On the basis of my own observations of the audiences with whom I have shared these poems as performances, however, I must partly disagree with his general rule, "the concealment of the poet's audience from the poet." Sometimes yes and sometimes, no. Just the title of the first poem said usually gets a chuckle from the audience, and as a performer I directly acknowledge our connection, the sharing of an inside joke about love and how we all sometimes feel about it, as though a disaster is imminent. McGeever's separation of "verse and prose forms" from connection with lyric expression also mystifies me, as I was under the impression that lyrics could be composed in both prose and verse. Also the witness is sometimes silent, and sometimes insists on getting into the act, even with body language if not with outright laughter (though I must admit that the audience's insistence on the first occasions on which I performed these poems rather rattled me, though finally I succumbed to their wisdom, and related to them overtly).

MAXINE TRAUERNICHT

We all probably would agree that it is possible in most cases for the interpreter to determine who the audience in the poem is. Not only is it possible; it is obligatory. If the interpreter has no clear conception of the person or persons to be addressed, the interpretation will suffer.

It seems to me what the interpreter asks of his listeners is different, depending upon who is the audience or receiver in the poem. It is easy enough to address directly the listeners in the audience. It is difficult, however, to convey the impression that there is a person being spoken to who is not in the audience of listeners. The problem lies in convincing the audience that they are looking in on a "scene" rather than being apealed to directly. Where to focus his eyes becomes a problem for the interpreter.

I have attempted to discover the "audience" in Chester Clayton Long's poems and to suggest a way in which this audience might be handled.

In "There Was Panic Aboard the Titanic, Too," it would seem to me that the interpreter is asking his audience of listeners to look in on the situation in which a "fellow" is speaking to a woman he loves. The interpreter may ask the members of the listening audience to suspend disbelief long enough to take part in the situation and to determine how they would respond if the speaker's words were being spoken to them. The best method of handling this would be for the interpreter to look with lack of definite focus slightly over the heads of the audience. There would be no change in the focus during the whole poem.

In "The Beast Within Me Is Dying of Neglect," the audience of listeners is addressed directly. There is direct communication from the interpreter to the audience. The interpreter should establish eye contact with the audience and maintain a communicative manner. The direct quotation "What horn is this?" could well be spoken directly to the audience as if the poet is repeating something said.

In "The Hobbit Who Lives Next Door Is Dying, Too," the audience in the poem is a woman to whom the poet is speaking. Here the interpreter may ask the audience of listeners to look in on the "scene" — to determine how they would respond if the lines were spoken to them. There would not be direct contact with the audience. Instead, the interpreter would address an imaginary being — looking slightly over the heads of the audience.

"Then the Radio Played the Dance of the Happy Spirits from Gluck's *Orpheus and Eurydice*" is a poem similar to "The Hobbit Who Lives Next Door Is Dying, Too" insofar as the audience is concerned. Again the audience in the poem is a woman to whom the poet is speaking and the poem could be

treated in a manner similar to the one described above.

University of Nebraska—Lincoln

Mr. Long's Comments:

Ms. Trauernicht gets the general audience parameters right in each case, at least so far as I can tell, having made the pieces. I wonder, however, if she agrees with what I see as a split focus within the first poem, varying according to the structure of metaphor, some dealing with specific cases, others with a more general or broader semantic referent. The more specific pointing to "privacy" from audience, the more general pointing to "public," "overt" inclusion of audience. For while the address is private, the issues of being in relationship are universal issues which affect all. The first three poems also contain elaborate, if not belly-laugh, jokes. Some of these are dual-referent, pointing in some cases to the audience, and in some to the apostrophized woman. For me in performance, this means that while I am concentrating on the woman, I am also at times doing "let in, double-takes," subtle clowning for the audience's benefit, while remaining "straight" in my address to the woman. Kinesically, these effects are so complex that I would need a stoppable video tape to point them out to people studying the poems.

WILLIAM A. BOYCE

In regarding oral interpretation as an art form, we must consider the aesthetic aspects of the written text, which form the basis for the oral interpretation act, as well as examine the act itself. A close study of the text will reveal the aesthetics of the composition, and a knowledge of the elements of the composition will assist in the determination of the aesthetic distancing or proxemics necessary during performance. We cannot totally isolate text from performance in oral interpretation, for as we discover the elements of composition, which make up the aesthetic whole, we also discover the relationship(s) of the persona to the message and to the listener(s). In fact, the aesthetics of the literature is an ideal blend of persona, message, and listener.

Because there is an interaction of persona and listener, we

may regard any poem as a "little drama" in which a speaker interacts with his own thoughts, his environment, or with other characters — whether within the work of literature or outside as a general public. Examining poetry in this way, we begin to see patterns of action developing. These patterns of action may be psychical, physical, or verbal, or a combination of any or all of these.

The listener (audience) is implicit in the style which the poet chooses for a particular work. To discover the style — the diction, the grammar — of a poem is to discover the tone and the attitudinal stance of the persona toward his message and his audience. And, in addition, to discover the point of view of the poem is to discover the poem's intended audience, whether it is the persona or some force or character outside the persona.

Chester Clayton Long, in three of his poems — "There Was Panic Aboard the Titanic, Too," "Then the Radio Played the Dance of the Happy Spirits From Gluck's *Orpheus and Eurydice*," and to some extent "The Hobbit Who Lives Next Door Is Dying, Too" — has provided us with little rhetorical dramas in which the person attempts to persuade the listener. In these poems the listener is the persona's beloved, who is the intended audience. The persona wants his audience — his beloved — to envision or understand (and perhaps accept) the situation as he sees it.

Because these little rhetorical dramas are addressed directly to an "in-the-poem" listener, the oral interpreter needs to visualize that person in his imagination and speak to a projected image of the listener, using only indirect eye contact with his physically present audience. Each poem, in the language of Mattingly and Grimes, presents a "closed situation."

"The Beast Within Me Is Dying of Neglect" is third-person narrative. Here the persona relates the action to a general public since no specific listener is implied to exist within the poem itself. The oral interpreter might deliver the poem using direct eye contact with his physically present audience; however, because of the detailed images in the poem, the audience might experience the poem more intensely should the interpreter envision the scene transpiring before him at the moment. The interpreter's own emotional intensity as he "watches" the action might well stimulate the audience to a stronger involvement in the literary experience.

In the three little rhetorical dramas the relationship of the persona with the implied audience (his beloved) is quite close, yet the interpreter's relationship with his physically present audience may be quite distant. Conversely, should the interpreter use direct eye contact with his physically present audience for "The Beast Within Me Is Dying of Neglect," the relationship would be one of proximity.

Wayne State University

Mr. Long's Comments:

I find Mr. Boyce's delineations of audience relationships as specified within the poems squaring with my own intentions (though my intentions may or may not be realized in the poems; and some relationships, as pointed out in Ms. Loesch's comment, may be there though I had not intended them to be or was not aware that they were there). Again, I think that the ones Boyce points to as directed at the apostrophized woman exclusively, tend at points to spill over to the listening audience, as in the very title of I. There is "rhetoric" in the poems, but it seems to me that the poems are more properly called "little imitative dramas;" that while they incorporate rhetorical devices, the rhetorical devices are subverted into being forced to play mimetic roles. A sticky point (and one on which I have only prejudices, since this point is not clearly worked out in my own mind on a theoretical basis as yet).

General Comment

All four of the commentators have done me a great service even to bother commenting upon my work. For the poet can always use careful criticism in his creative growth. I only wish more opportunities of this sort had been afforded me in the past twenty years of my verse writing. I might have developed more rapidly. But as Robert Frost once said, "it takes forty years to make a poet." I've still got at least twenty years left before I decide either to continue or to hang it up.

One thing pleases me immensely, however. My teacher, the late Theodore Roethke, insisted that the young poets whose creative development he tried to further in his own inimitable way, must always start with the idea of a live audience in mind. To do otherwise, he taught us, was to be merely innocuous and simple-minded. It is clear to me that all the commentators understand, each in his or her own way, this critical insight of his. And I am of the opinion that the poet who writes only to please himself is not a poet, but a jackanapes.

Thanks to my commentators, and to the staff of **Issues in Interpretation.**

University of Illinois,
Chicago Circle

THE EDITORS' RESPONSE

The editors, too, would like to thank each contributor to this issue. Like Chester Clayton Long, we believe the responses will help us all to sharpen our abilities to handle this sometimes difficult area of Interpretation. We would also like to thank Mr. Long for his poems, his insights, and his generosity. Though we think the most important and valuable considerations appear above, the editors believe they would be remiss not to add several additional considerations, hoping to receive feedback from our audience.

Mr. Long has said elsewhere that he believes audience treatment to be *"structurally imbedded within"* each piece of literature (our emphasis). The editors wonder if many in our discipline are not too ready to advocate theories which can be made to fit the piece of literature (the influence, indeed dominance, of I.A. Richard's theories of language as drama seem particularly popular at present). Should we not, instead, be working from inside the literature to see what it can tell us of its audience? Rhetoricians, such as Marie Hochmuth Nichols, have told us that if "style is the man himself, then a close scrutiny of the details of style should tell us what manner of man is doing the speaking . . . and in what relationship he conceives himself to be with his audience."[1] But it is the style of the literature's speech which gives us the "manner of the man" and "the relationship . . . with his audience," not overlayed theories. In other words, are we, in searching for the speaker and his audience(s), working from the outside in, straight-jacketing a poem (or any literature) with literary theories? Should we be? After all, many of these same theories originated in studies of language and its use by speakers. And we should not forget that many such theories are literate concepts, to which a speaker must make adjustments in the act of oral performance, not oral performative concepts, any of which transcend the literate boundaries of communication.

We wonder, too, if the contributors (or indeed any of us) read these poems aloud before an audience to arrive at their conclusions? The editors were surprised (and somewhat ashamed) to find that they themselves had not, and we have begun to wonder if live audiences have become unimportant to us? Surely, at one time, audiences became too dominant; yet now, we seem to have begun "navel-gazing," working on our responses in isolation, through silent, literary analysis. Professor Long, in his recent Interpretation textbook, warns students of the inherent dangers of such an approach. And surely we all recognize the danger; but when push comes to shove, which comes first? Beautiful as our navels may be, we would all do

well to recognize the wisdom in these words:

> *It follows that the aural and the visual belong together in interpretation . . . For one thing, the interpreter must, like any performer, dominate his audience. He does not do this with his voice alone, but also with his physical presence. . . . the eyes of the audience, as well as their ears are engaged. . . . They look to the interpreter as to the organizer of their emotions and the purveyor of the understanding of their work.*[2]

The editors point no accusing fingers, for if they did they know at whom the fingers would first point. But this matter of *performance* and "present" audience response is important. A consideration of this response, as previously indicated, forms the basis of the final part of our consideration on the audience in Oral Interpretation. But for now, let the question merely be posed: how important do we all believe the listening audience to be in Interpretation? Ms. Trauernicht says an interpreter must have a "clear conception" of his listening audience but fails to say why. The editors (in complete agreement with her) wonder if any of us can answer why. Do we believe Oral Interpretation to be a function of the audience at each step of the process so that we must make adjustments accordingly? Or do we decide, in advance, as Ms. Loesch maintains, the role of the "real" audience?

And those questions lead us to our last comment: the matter of the "fictive" audiences must in some way lead us to ponder or to guess at the "listening" audience's response. This is clearly a matter of some importance to Professor Long. It would seem obvious that the more concrete the "fictive" audience becomes, the more evidence of response the persona (and thus the interpreter) must seem to receive from that "fictive" audience. Both Mr. Long and Ms. Loesch have advocated such a position, but it is difficult to determine if our other respondents agree. We would like to close our response, then, by asking our readers if they share such a view; if they notice such evidence of response in their students' performance and in their own? And if our readers are not still performing to learn better how to perform, God help us all.

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1 Marie Hochmuth Nichols, *Rhetoric and Criticism* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1967), p. 14.

2 Hugh Dickinson, "Readers or Rhapsodes," *QJS*, XLV (October, 1959), 262.

THE NEXT ISSUE

The Audience in Oral Interpretation: Performance

We have considered audience as a theoretical perspective of interpretation and as a communicative component of literature crafted into the text. These are both pre-performance conditions — plans we take into the performance as guides drawn out for us by theory and by the text. But as pre-performance plans, they do not take into consideration the influences of the audience before whom we perform. If we are not influenced by audience response while we perform, then we might as well send the audience a video tape of our performance, a record of our pre-performance plans which will remain immutable to their response. We all know about the influences of audience because we have been interpreters; but our theory does not clearly account for the interpreter's response to audience feedback. In a sense, we have run out of footnotes; we have only ourselves to footnote now.

If interpretation is a transaction among literature, performer, and audience, isn't the transaction, by its very nature, reciprocal? Or do we deny the audience a reciprocal capacity by "fourth-walling" ourselves? If interpretation is a process of matching literature with the performer, then when that matching takes place, isn't there yet another matching process between the literature/performer and the audience? Or is the audience an influence *during* the matching process which takes place as we perform? Do we perform *to* an audience, *at* an audience, *with* an audience, *for* an audience, or do we merely perform *in front of* an audience? Can the interpreter deal successfully with the literature and, with apparent simultaneity, deal with the responses of the audience?

Depending on what one considers a correct interpretation, any alteration of pre-performance plans during the performance may be advantageous or disadvantageous. But we cannot deny that an alteration takes place. To deny that it does take place is to assert that we are impervious to the presence of the audience, that we are engaged in an elitist encounter with literature, that we have succeeded in removing literature from human communication.

The one word which interpreters use to explain their communicative relationship with audiences is "share." Unfortunately, it is a vague word. And since we have relied on that word as a theoretical placebo, it has become interpretation's cliche. We are not challenging the possible accuracy of "sharing" as the interpreter's communicative role; rather, we are requesting a clarification of it, or perhaps a substitution for it.

In short, we are asking: when all the pre-performance plans are made, should we alter these plans in response to an audience? And if we should, how should we do it? Do we prepare ourselves with theory and literary investigation up to the moment of performance and then turn ourselves loose in front of an audience, without guides for our *interaction* with them?

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Indiana State University
Institute for Readers Theatre
LeMoyne College
University of Minnesota — Twin Cities
Moorhead (MN) State University
Murray State University
University of North Carolina — Chapel Hill
Purdue University
Saddleback Community College
Southwest Missouri State University
Texas A & I University
Towson State College
Western Kentucky University
Wright State University